



Join the growers

Kent's food and drink sector is worth £2.6bn to the UK economy, with some of the country's leading manufacturers, producers and distributors located here. Food and drink is the largest manufacturing sector in the UK.

It accounted for 16% of total manufacturing output and generated £27 billion in Gross Value Added and £79 billion in sales in 2016. The sector has grown its output by 21% since 1990, a growth rate surpassed only by the chemicals, pharmaceuticals, motor vehicles and other transport sectors.





The county, unsurprisingly given its history and reputation as the Garden of England, is an established cluster with 2,485 food and drink related companies, employing 18,000+ people.

Britain's oldest brewer Shepherd Neame, first set out Kent's stall as a leading food and drink brand in 1698. Today they're one of a number of award-winning breweries, distilleries and winemakers, including Copper Rivet in Chatham Maritime and Chapel Down in Tenterden. French brand Taittinger is one of the latest to join. The UK is the 2nd largest exporter of beverages in the world.

The quality of Kent's natural assets – with some of the most productive agricultural land in Britain – is also bolstered by a reputation for innovation that has created a thriving ecosystem for food manufacturing, production and distribution, including Thanet Earth, the largest greenhouse complex in the UK.

Excellent connections, a strong supply and distribution infrastructure and access to support and guidance from Locate in Kent, trade organisation Produced in Kent and sector champions Rural PLC (Kent) have all contributed to this sector's ongoing success.

Key Locations

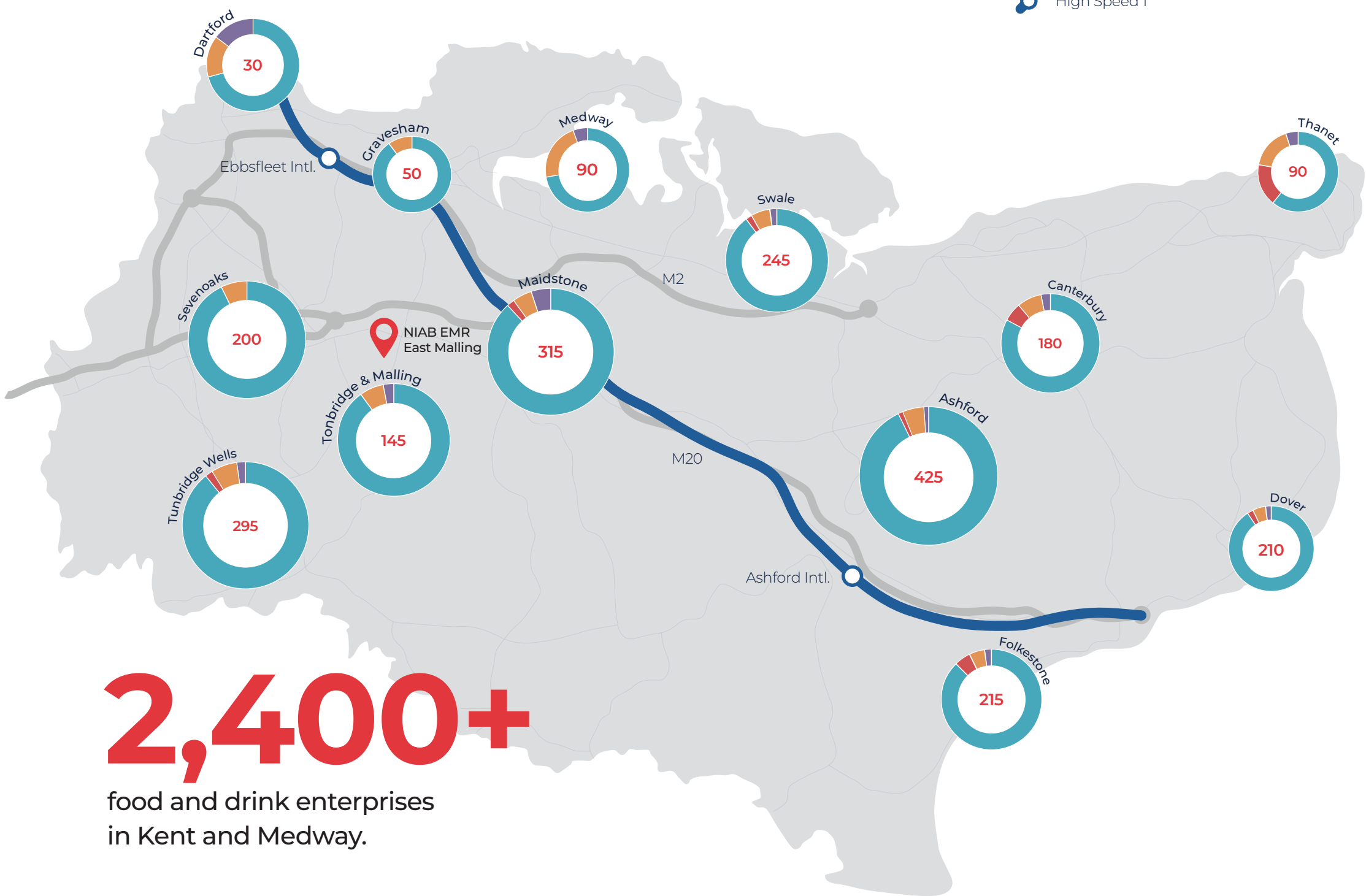
-  NIAB EMR,
East Malling
-  Ashford
-  Maidstone
-  Tunbridge Wells

Kent's Leading Food and Drink Enterprises

£2.6 billion

The value of Kent's food and drink sector to the UK economy is £2.6bn

- Farming
- Fishing
- Food product manufacture
- Beverage manufacture
- High Speed 1



2,400+ food and drink enterprises in Kent and Medway.

425

With 425 food and drink enterprises, **Ashford** has the highest number of Kent businesses in this sector.

18,000+

Employees in the food and drink production industry across Kent and Medway.



Hadlow College in Kent is a specialist high quality, land-based college offering a huge range of courses to degree level. Graded as 'outstanding' by Ofsted at its last inspection and a LSIS Beacon provider.



250 million



Approximately 1 in 4.5 of all the British apples and 1 in 3 of the British Conference pears sold in the UK come from AC Goatham & Son in Medway. That's over 200 million apples and 50 million pears each year.

3.8%

The rise in the number of food and drink enterprises in Kent and Medway over the past five years. 100 companies in this sector have joined us since 2013.



Kent has the **fourth highest agricultural workforce** in the country after Devon, North Yorkshire and Lincolnshire.

Need support growing your food & drink business?

From property and site selection to access to funding; skills advice and sector expertise, we can help.



"The team at Locate in Kent spent a good few months searching for the right premises for us, making sure they met all of our requirements. They also helped us secure funding that we didn't realise we were entitled to."

Nimisha Raja
Founder of Nims
Fruit Crisps



Connectivity

Extremely well connected by rail, road, air and sea and with its close proximity to London and Europe, Kent has easy, fast and efficient access to key markets. **High Speed 1** is a major point of difference for Kent, offering access to London by train in **17 minutes**. It's often quicker for people to reach the capital from the county than to cross it.



Skills

Kent's four universities provide a wealth of graduates across key growth sectors each year, including the University of Kent which ranks within the **top 25 universities in the UK and top 500 globally**. With a local population of over **1.8 million** and access to millions more from neighbouring regions, Kent offers a highly diverse talent pool.



Cost

Cheaper property and lower salaries make Kent a cost-effective base for business. Kent's commercial property is up to **60% lower** in rental or purchase price compared to London. This combined with a highly skilled workforce with lower salary levels can result in operational savings of **up to 55%**.



Quality of life

Made up of traditional pretty English villages, bustling towns, stunning countryside and over **350 miles of coastline**, Kent is designated as an area of outstanding natural beauty for good reason. Yet average residential property price are approximately **33% cheaper than London**.

CONTACT US

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Kent produces

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